COMIC CUTS 2D.

SOUND A FANFARE! HERE'S YOUR FUNFARE!

[No. 2,688.]

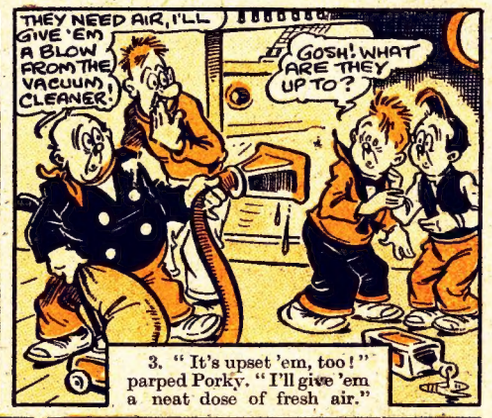
THE CRUSOE KIDS ARE IN THE RUNNING FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP!

[MAY 9, 1942.]

THEY'RE DOING THE SPRING CLEANING, SO WE'LL GIVE 'EM SOME ENERGY IN A DOSE OF THIS SUPER STRONG TONIC!
OH, YEAH! SNITCH ON THE CLEANER, AND MOP THE LOT UP!

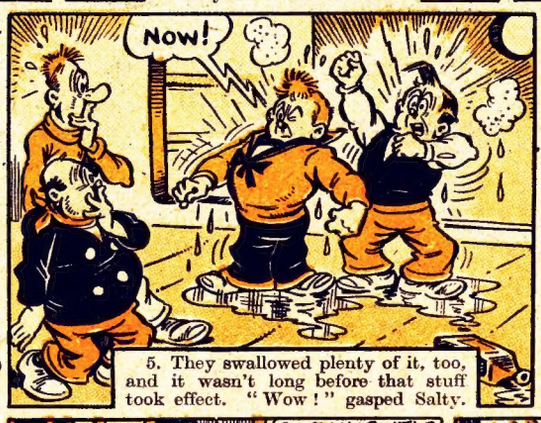
1. To make the kids work harder the mates plotted to give them a tonic. But Shrimp got the vacuum to take it.

2. "Empty!" howled Salty, upturning the bottle. "They have sunk the lot!"



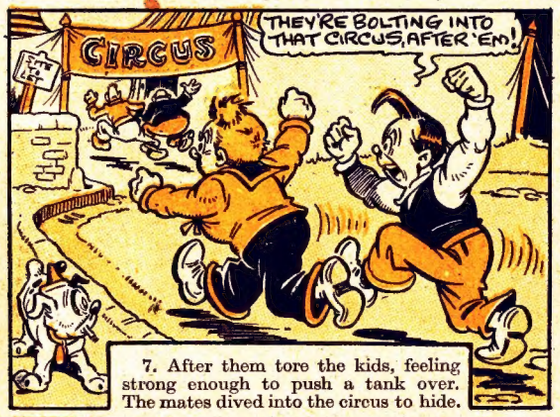
3. "It's upset 'em, too!" parped Porky. "I'll give 'em a neat dose of fresh air."

4. So he set the vacuum working, and out gushed the tonic in a shower. Our nibs stopped it with their faces.

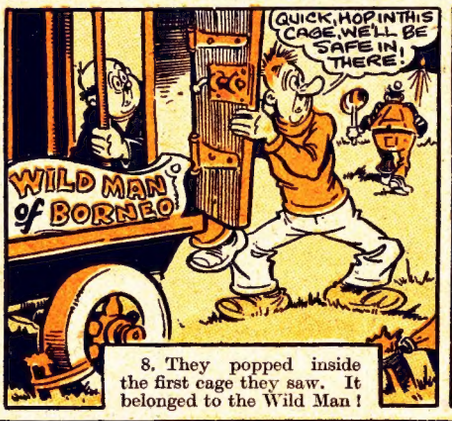


5. They swallowed plenty of it, too, and it wasn't long before that stuff took effect. "Wow!" gasped Salty.

6. "I don't like the look of those two." So he did a skedaddle with Porky.

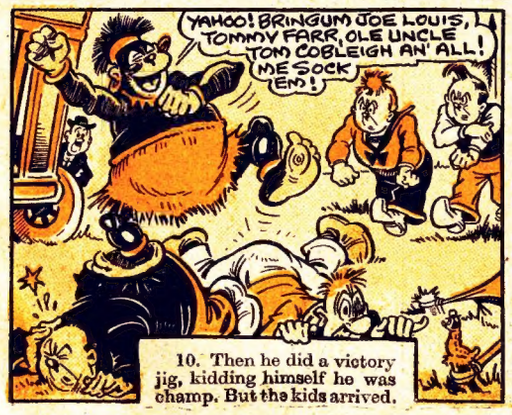


7. After them tore the kids, feeling strong enough to push a tank over. The mates dived into the circus to hide.

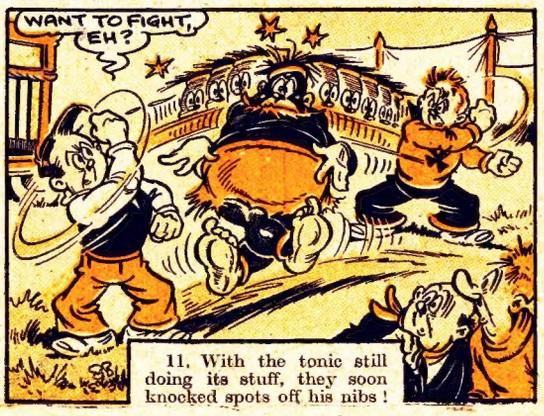


8. They popped inside the first cage they saw. It belonged to the Wild Man!

9. He was at home, too, but not to visitors. He gave the mates a warm reception before he buzzed them out!



10. Then he did a victory jig, kidding himself he was champ. But the kids arrived.



11. With the tonic still doing its stuff, they soon knocked spots off his nibs!

12. So Wild Man and mates were carted off, whilst our heroes clicked!

Kenton Steel's Latest Case.

THE ANGRY VISITOR!

Four Victims.

THE manager of the Claxton Hotel, Mr. Stevens, was pacing the floor of his private office in a fever of impatience. The muscles of his face were twitching, and it was obvious that he was very worried.

There came a tap on the door, and a pageboy poked his head in on hearing the summons to enter.

"Mr. Steel is here, sir!" he said.

"Ah, good!" breathed Stevens with obvious relief. "Show him in at once, please."

A few seconds later Kenton Steel, the famous detective, entered the office accompanied by his young assistant, Nutty Brown, and the door was closed behind them.

"I'm very grateful to you for coming along at once, Mr. Steel," said the hotel manager after shaking hands. "As I told you on the phone, the matter is urgent—one that must be investigated and cleared up at once, if possible."

"What's the trouble exactly?" inquired Steel, dropping into a chair.

"Robbery," was the reply. "No less than four of the people here have reported to me this morning that their rooms have been entered and jewellery or valuables stolen. That sort of thing does not do a place like this any good. That is why I am very anxious to have someone get on track of the thief immediately—and with no publicity if it can be avoided. I don't want the police brought in if I can help it."

"I see," said Steel with a nod. "Four people have been robbed, you say. Are they recent comers to the hotel?"

"No, they are all residents of fairly long standing," was the reply. "All except one, that is to say—a Mr. Rodney. He has been here just over a week. He has had a bundle of notes stolen to the value of close on a hundred pounds, he informs me, and he is furious about it. He declares that he will clear out to some other hotel during the day, and also threatens to take legal action against us to recover his loss. I can assure you, I've had a very worrying time."

"I expect you have," agreed Steel. "How about the others—how are they taking it?"

"Oh, they are more reasonable, but very upset, all the same," said the hotel manager. "I've promised to do my utmost to retrieve their missing property, and in return they have assured me that they will not breathe a word about the thefts—for the time being, at any rate."

"I'm glad of that—it will probably be helpful," said Steel. "Well, I think the first thing for me to do is to visit the rooms where the robberies took place, and, if possible, interview the various victims."

"Very good," said Stevens. "I'll take you along."

Steel and Nutty accompanied him in the lift to the first floor. The hotel, though not large, was exceedingly comfortable and well furnished.

"Perhaps you'd like to see Mr. Rodney first," suggested Stevens. "He's may be leaving at any time. He's asked for his bill, although I have not yet had it made out. I kept it back purposely as I thought you would possibly wish to see him along with the others."

"Well, it certainly won't do any harm," said Steel with a smile.

Stevens tapped on a closed door along the corridor, and a deep voice bade them enter. Going into the large bedsitting-room, the three saw a man of about fifty, with dark-tinted glasses and neatly trimmed beard.

"I hope I'm not troubling you, Mr. Rodney," said Stevens, "but this gentleman has come along to investigate the robberies."

"Well, I hope he'll succeed in getting back my stolen money," replied Rodney crossly, after a prolonged stare at Steel. "In any case, I'm clearing out of this hotel as soon as you let me have my bill."

"I understand," interposed Kenton Steel, going forward, "that you have had the misfortune to lose close on a hundred pounds."

"That is so," replied Rodney. "And it's a very serious loss for me. The money was all in pound-notes, too, so I have very faint hopes about ever getting it back."

"Where was the money taken from?" asked Steel.

"From that bag," replied Rodney, pointing to a portmanteau on the floor. "I suppose it was silly of me to leave such a large sum of money in it. But I never thought for a moment that there were thieves in this so-called hotel!"

Kenton Steel eyed the portmanteau for some moments. Then he turned to Rodney again, to notice that his right hand was bandaged.

"Hurt yourself?" asked Steel.

"Er—no—not exactly," replied Rodney. "Just a scratch across the back of my hand. I'd better put something over to keep it clean."

Steel nodded and turned to Stevens.

"I'll go along to the other rooms," he said. "I don't think Mr. Rodney can help me much."

With that Steel and Nutty accompanied the hotel manager along the corridor, and, one after another, the three other victims of the robberies were interviewed.

They were all ladies. The first had had jewellery stolen to the value of some three hundred pounds. The second had also lost jewellery, though not to the same amount.

In each case the jewellery had been taken out of a locked drawer. On examination, Steel saw that they had evidently been opened with duplicate or skeleton keys, for there was no sign of forcing.

The third victim, a Mrs. Powell, had kept her missing property in a medium-sized portmanteau, she explained to Kenton Steel.

"I put it right at the bottom, underneath a lot of things," she said. "But the thief found the jewellery all right and got away with it. I was wearing it last night, and put it back in the portmanteau before I went to bed."

"Yes, it's pretty obvious that the thefts are quite recent, and have taken place during the last few hours," replied Steel. "Perhaps you would allow me to examine that bag."

"Certainly," replied Mrs. Powell, "I will unlock it for you."

She lifted the bag on to a table and undid the two safety locks with a key. Then she threw open the lid, took out the assorted contents till it was quite empty.

"That's where my jewellery case was," she said, pointing to the bottom of the bag. "But it's not there now, as you can see."

"No, that is so," agreed Steel.

All the same, as he spoke, his eyes narrowed, and he peered intently into the bag. He then carried it across to the window for better light, and pulled out a small but powerful magnifying glass.

"H'm!" he ejaculated at last, turning away and slowly walking back to the table on which he dumped the bag. "I've found a clue!" he asked the lady quickly.

"A possible clue," replied Steel. "Anyway, I mean to follow it up. All right, Mr. Stevens, you can go—I expect you have plenty to occupy you one way and another."

Stevens bowed and went downstairs. Steel and Nutty came out of the room and walked along the corridor. After a few whispered words Steel went on his way, leaving Nutty where he was.

The Attack.

"COME in!"

In response to the command, following his tap on the door, Steel entered once more the room occupied by Rodney. He carefully closed the door behind him.

For a long moment the two men eyed each other in silence. Rodney was the first to speak.

"Oh, so it's you again!" he snapped. "Found anything?"

"Er—yes!" replied Steel quietly, and turned to stare down at the closed portmanteau. "I wonder whether you would be good enough to allow me to look in that bag of yours?"

Rodney stared hard.

"Look in my bag?" he said. "What on earth for? You don't suppose you'll find any clues there, do you? Or—or are you suggesting——"

He broke off and drew in a long, hissing breath.

"By heaven!" he went on, his voice rising. "Are you suggesting that any of the missing property is in that portmanteau of mine—that—that I am the thief?"

Kenton Steel smiled.

"Calm yourself, Mr. Rodney," he replied. "I am suggesting nothing. As you know, I have been called in to investigate this unfortunate affair, and you are also aware that three other people besides yourself have been robbed. I have already interviewed the other three and examined the drawers and the bag from which the stuff was stolen. You told me the missing notes were in that portmanteau."

"That's right, so they were," replied Rodney.

"Well, I should like to look inside it," said Steel.

"But—but this is ridiculous!" stormed Rodney. "My bag is packed and I'm ready to clear out. I've already asked for my bill, and I'll better ring for it again to be set up at once."

He crossed the room with the intention of pressing the bell-push. With a motion of his hand, Kenton Steel stopped him.

"Just one moment, Mr. Rodney, please," he said. "I know you are in a hurry to leave here. But I am equally in a hurry to get to the bottom of this business and trace the missing property if I can. You can help me by allowing me to look in that bag. Is it locked?"

Rodney breathed hard.

"No, it isn't," he replied. "But——"

"Thank you," said Kenton Steel, and, waiting to hear no more, he dropped on his knees beside the closed portmanteau.

And, as he did so, a vivid change came over Rodney. He tensed in every muscle, and, whisking out a life-preserver, raised it above his head.

Unaware of his danger, Kenton Steel started to open the bag. But as his fingers closed on the bag fastenings the life-preserver came crashing down on his head.

Completely stunned, Steel thudded to the floor and lay in a huddled heap. Rodney put away the life-preserver and stared down at his victim for some moments.

Then he became galvanised into action. He slammed his hat on his head, snatched up the portmanteau, and went quickly out of the room, closing the door behind him.

Almost at a sprint he went along the corridor, and in his haste he did not see Nutty Brown, who dodged back quickly into a deep alcove.

As soon as the man had passed, Nutty came forth again. Looking one way, he saw Rodney making for the stairs. Nutty promptly ran along to the room the man had just left and darted in.

Then a gasp of horror broke from him at what he saw. Steel was lying on the floor, eyes closed, completely unconscious.

With a bound Nutty was by his side, and for a moment he was in a quandary. His first impulse was to stay with Kenton Steel.

Nutty's mind was quickly made up. Duty first! Seeing Rodney make for corridor, he saw that the lift was just coming down from an upper floor. He dashed for it and got in.

"Non-stop to the ground floor!" he rapped out, and the lift whizzed down.

Rodney was just descending the last flight of steps, Nutty saw as they passed. The lad made a dive from the lift in the direction of the manager's office and burst inside without ceremony.

Stevens was there together with two members of the staff. They all turned surprised eyes on the newcomer.

"Quick, Mr. Stevens!" gulped Nutty. "Something has happened! That man Rodney is trying to get away. He must be stopped. He has struck down Mr. Steel—he's lying on the floor of Rodney's room!"

With alacrity the three men went outside the office in time to see Rodney approaching. He gave a start, then forced a smile.

"Ah, I'm not trying to sneak off without paying!" he said. "I want to settle my bill right now."

"We've got something to settle with you first!" cried Nutty fiercely.

As he spoke he pluckily hurled himself on the astounded Rodney, who dropped his portmanteau. Next instant the two members of the hotel staff joined in, and, before he had found breath enough to protest, Rodney had been whisked inside the manager's office and the door locked.

There he was kept prisoner whilst Nutty went for the police. They quickly arrived and took charge of Rodney, whilst Nutty and the bewildered Mr. Stevens hurried up to the third floor.

Bursting into the room where Steel was lying, they met him just struggling up, having recovered his wits. He was given some brandy, and in a short time was quite himself.

And down in the manager's office a little later, Steel explained everything, after first opening Rodney's portmanteau and finding hidden at the bottom all the missing jewellery.

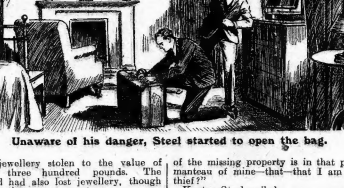
"His story about losing that money was boloney," said Steel. "He only invented that to divert suspicion from himself. It was the thefts he can see. And he very nearly got away with it, after giving me that cosh on the head with his life-preserver to open his bag. He knew the game was up then."

"But what put you on the track?" asked Stevens.

"His bandaged hand," replied Steel. "He told us he'd scratched it, and I found out from Mrs. Powell's jewellery case that the lid of Mrs. Powell's bag, where she kept her jewellery, Rodney scratched his hand. He must have left a trail of blood spots on the bottom of the bag. He's an excellent actor, and did his best to try to stop me from looking inside his portmanteau. But the more he protested, the more I felt sure I was on the right track. Now you can take him away."

(Another Kenton Steel story in our next number, on sale Friday week.)

9-8-42



Unaware of his danger, Steel started to open the bag.

CAPTURED!

A thrilling story of our R.A.F. chums in Burma.

Troops in the Sky.

Tony leaped the table and crashed his fist between the jap general's eyes!

ALONE aeroplane droned in the tropic sky. It was the famous Super Defiant fighter, "Flying Skull," with the ace-pilot, Tony Starr, at the controls. The seat in the gun-turret was occupied by Sergeant Badger, one of the "straight-est shooters," in every sense, who had ever worn the R.A.F. uniform.

The plane had left the base at Ayong Island, on routine patrol. In parts of enemy-occupied Burma, near the coast, Chinese troops were still harassing the Japanese lines of communication. So successful, indeed, were these detached companies that the ruthless General Koroki had been compelled to wire Rangoon for jap reinforcements.

Tony stifled a yawn. He cruised at 15,000 feet, and banked in a wide half-circle. Glancing through the cockpit hood, he saw the blue sea of the Bay of Bengal, fringed with white foam, along his starboard wing. To the east stretched the green jungles and blue hills of Burma, patched by the brown of burned cultivations.

"Huh! It's slow!" he grunted into the "mike." "No Japs in sight!"

He swung the plane seaward again. Then suddenly Badger spoke:

"Look to your left, sir! There are four aeroplanes flyin' the same way as us!"

The Flying Skull had just turned northward, and Tony made another pass'urn to obtain a view in the direction indicated. Then he saw the four aircraft mentioned. They were in line ahead, and the wings of each gleamed with the badge of the red sun of Japan!

They were not it appeared, four aeroplanes, but one large K.F. troop-carrier, towing three troop-carrying gliders of German pattern.

Scarcely had Tony scored the Skull high above the enemy convoy and dived almost vertically out of the sun. Faster and faster, at slashing speed, he tore down upon the big K-Y machine and pressed the gun-button. A tearing tornado of pom-pom shells, lead bullets, and fiery tracers ripped the Jap from tip to tail.

Then the tail fell out, and not a split second too soon. The troop-carrier fell apart as if slashed by an invisible buzz-saw, then burst with an explosion that hurled the leading glider into a grotesque somersault.

Instantly Tony began to regain height, and Badger brought the rear guns on aim. Another hail of hot lead ripped two of the gliders on their course. Then again the Skull lashed back to the attack, evading machine-gun fire from survivors on the rear glider.

Tony's own guns spat that heavily-leaden "rain" spinning seaward in clouds of smoke whilst Badger sliced through the wing of another and sent the remaining glider reeling out of the sky before the Super-Defiant zoomed upward out of range.

The smoking wrecks of the Japanese aircraft plunged into the sea, scattering the bodies of the armed troops to the hungry, waiting sharks.

"That, breathed Badger, "clears the air a bit."

"Tough luck for the sons of the Rising Sun!" muttered Tony. "I'll bet when they set out they weren't expecting a total eclipse!"

Something had gone wrong with the Japanese plan. Normally, they would have been an "umbrella" of fighting planes to guard the troop carriers. The likelihood was that, by some mistake, the escort had failed to make contact with the air-convoy.

Tony nosed the plane eastward across the coast and over the jungle. Then suddenly he saw black dots in the sky, which rapidly took the form of night-fighters.

Yi! Brace yourself, sarge!" he yelled. "Here they come!"

The Jap planes slashed down like thunderbolts. Tony depressed the "stick," and the Skull shot earthward at dizzy speed. But, warned about what to expect, Badger was well on the alert and slewed his gun as the first storm of lead lashed past.

At the same instant the sergeant concentrated on the leading Japanese plane and returned the fire. In another dramatic moment the Jap fighter was transformed into a blazing comet that hurtled out of the sky and exploded in fragments on the ground far below.

The Flying Skull darted this way and that like a startled snipe. Tony and Badger in turn brought their guns to bear, and another Jap plane was sent blazing to its doom. But the enemy pilots attacked with suicidal recklessness.

Bullets peppered the Skull's fuselage; the rudder was damaged and one of the wings ripped away. Tracers started two fires in the machine, only one of which Badger was able to put out.

"We've got to go down!" Tony panted.

A crash landing was the only hope of survival, but underneath stretched a forest without any open space in sight. Peering down, Tony saw a little tribe of monkeys scurrying through the branches of the trees. They envied them—at least, they were comparatively safe.

A gasp fate in the burning plane appeared the likely end to their adventures. But Tony made a last bid for life. He shut off the engine, dived again to avoid the Japanese attackers, and pancaked on to the tree-tops.

"Jump for it!" he gasped.

The Skull settled on the trees, and the snapping of the lighter branches mingled with the harsh ripping of the plane's fabric. Both men were bruised by the fall, but scarcely felt the pain. The fire in the machine spread rapidly, whilst overhead the Japanese planes circled like vultures.

The Fateful Bomb!

TONY and Badger swung hand-over-hand among the branches, away from the blaze that spread quickly to the trees.

They clambered down at a safe distance and then slid off, unseen, through the undergrowth. The flying Skull had been lost, but this could be re-placed and the one problem now was how to escape from Burma.

"We must try to snaffle a boat after dark, Badger," Tony suggested; "that seems to be our only chance."

They followed winding game-trails through the jungle, pausing at times to listen lest Japanese search parties were near. Monkeys chattered and parrots squawked, but they heard nothing else until, to their amazement, a voice called to them in pidgin English:

"Hi-yi, fiends! Me Chineseman-velly good fellow! No shootee me!"

An unarmed Chinese, in jacket and trousers of dark green, emerged from among the trees. He introduced himself as Wang, and proved to be a "partisan" of the Chinese troops that still raided the hated Japanese invaders.

He led them to a hut built of bamboos and disguised with green foliage, gave them food, and afterwards showed them some of his handiwork in a gloomy cellar beneath.

"Me makee bombs for Chineeman soldiers, fiends," Wang announced proudly. "These nicee bombs look allee same. But thin piece follow go bang and blow up Jap dogs, and this one is stinkee-bomb and make plenty smoke."

He had no firearms to give them, and neither Tony nor Badger wanted to be loaded with bombs, home-made bombs—explosive or stink-bombs—on their dash to the coast.

"Please, no take one nicee bomb," Wang urged. "If Jap dogs catchee, you blow up evelybody heap quick!"

"Oh Wang's a cheerful kind of bloke," grinned Badger, "but I dare say there's some sense in what he's suggesting."

Wang told them of the terrible treatment meted out by General Koroki's troops to Chinese captives in Burma. It were better to chose your own fate and die quickly than trust to the Jap! Tony said.

He unearthed a couple of old khaki sun-helmets and, groping in the cellar again, found the home-made bombs in the crown of one of them, then sewed the stiff silk lining over it. By pulling out a metal button at the top of the helmet, he explained the bomb could be made to explode within five seconds.

"Well, it might come in useful," Tony muttered.

He rewarded Wang with money and wore the sun-helmet when he and Badger set off towards the coast. No trust could be placed in the barbarous Japs, and it gave them a feeling of satisfaction that they might possibly explode that lot if they were captured, and perhaps destroy some of the hated enemy also.

The wind had was blowing the jungle fire away from them, but they could still see the distant red glow after the short tropic twilight. Then storm-clouds gathered fast and a warm deluge swept the land.

They reached the coast after nightfall, and turned southward in search of a boat. Presently, creeping across a clearing, a bright light shone on them and a score of Japanese soldiers leaped into view, with levelled rifles and tommy-guns.

"Nobbled!" Badger panted. "What bloomin' ass-hole let off fireworks?"

He hoped that his officer would jerk the metal button from the top of the sun-helmet, and take the quick way out. But Tony refused to take that suicidal action, and the Japs grasped his arms and dragged him forward.

Tronical rain had lashed down noisily, and drenched the entire party to the skin. The Japanese hurried the captives on, prodding them with rifle-butts when they stumbled. It was difficult to see far ahead, but they heard the roar of a ship's anchor cable running out, and Tony guessed they were near a small port and that the vessel was probably a Japanese warship.

Unexpectedly, they came into a clearing where sentries challenged. The chums saw the shape of bell-tents and dome-like huts in the middle; all of them camouflaged with branches and foliage to prevent their being seen from the air.

Closely guarded, Tony and Badger waited in the teeming rain while a Jap sergeant reported, then both were marched inside the big tent, where they blinked in the light of an oil-lamp.

Three officers in full dress were there, one seated at a table spread with maps and the other two standing beside him.

The K.-B.F. pals noted the rank of the senior officer who sat facing them, and Badger gave a startled gasp:

"It's old Croaky!"

The officer bared his yellow teeth in a leering smile.

"It is so!" he rasped in English. "I am General Koroki. And you—you are the debased Brit dogs who fought against our honourable airmen in the sky!"

"That's so," Tony admitted, "and shot a few of 'em down."

The infamous general glared balefully.

"Uncover your heads, dogs!" he ordered brusquely. "Let me see your despicable faces!"

The pals took off their soaked sun-helmets, and Tony gently stroked the fateful metal button on the top of his.

For the next fifteen minutes the general plied them with questions. He wanted military information, but getting no satisfactory replies, reached quickly across the table and struck the prisoners across the mouth.

"My time has been wasted long enough!" General Koroki spluttered. "But I am an honourable and humane man, even when dealing with debased Brit dogs. We have no bullets to waste, but you shall chose how you shall die—by the bayonet or the rope."

Badger and Badger exchanged glances. This seemed to be the end. There was one other choice, however—one that General Koroki did not suspect. By exploding Wang's home-made bomb, hidden in the silk lining of the sun-helmet, they could possibly end instantly and destroy the brutal Japanese general, his staff officers, and the soldiers of the same fate. Tony said:

"You decide, sir," muttered Badger.

"I've decided," Tony said quietly.

He removed the metal helmet that acted as the bomb's safety-pin and placed the sun-helmet on the table.

"Well?" the general demanded.

"What do you say, dog?"

"I say, you low brute," retorted Tony loudly, "that you've also sealed your own doom!"

General Koroki sat bolt upright; he opened his mouth to speak. But the swift seconds had passed, and a dull explosion resounded inside the tent.

Immediately all was confusion. To their amazement, Tony and Badger still found themselves alive—and unharmed! They were both dense with smoke, and evil-smelling, that hid everything.

Quicker-witted than the Japs, Tony leaped to his feet and dashed for the door between the general's eyes. Screened by the smoke, he snatched the officer's sword and hurled it with all his might at the wall. And, meantime, Badger hacked the legs of a Japanese soldier from under him and seized the man's rifle.

"This way!" Tony gasped.

He slashed through the canvas of the tent, and Badger followed into the open after him. A sentry stepped out in front of the fugitives as they dodged between the tents, and Tony cut him down by a slashing blow of the sword. Then the pair hurtled into the shelter-ing jungle and trekked swiftly down to the seashore.

They crept along to a wharf where a small Chinese launch was waiting in the charge of four Japanese seamen. It was no time for kid-glove methods, and the pals attacked them instantly with sword and gun-butt and "liquidated" them. Ten minutes later they were heading for the coast through the rainy darkness, on the way back to the base at Ayong Island.

"Well, Badger, old bean" Tony grinned, "I sure thought we were for the high jump that time! We can thank Wang for the lucky break. I suppose, groping around in that cellar of his, he stuck a stink bomb in the old sun-helmet by mistake!"

(Another thrilling war story in our next number, on sale Friday week.)

CLARENCE CALLING!

My dear Chiefs,—I'm sorry I got squeezed right out of our last number, but this time, as you see, I've managed to get this little corner for myself.

Well, we're getting into brighter days now, and here's another bumper number of your favourite fun-paper to make them brighter still. I am sure you will enjoy every story and fun picture, and I am equally sure that when you have finished with it, you will make the most of it by sharing it with some pal who has not been able to get a copy.

After which, of course, it goes into the advance collection. Nowadays there is no such thing as waste paper—it is all vitally needed to be used again to help the war effort. So keep your collection going regularly, and try to make it as big as you can.

Cheeri-ho, chums, and all the best!

Your very good friend,

CLARENCE CUTS.

9-5-42

WADDLES THE WAITER
TRIPS UP A SILVER SNATCHER!
FETCH ME THE BIGGEST TEA I CAN HAVE FOR A THANNER—AND NO TIP!
NO TIP, EH? ALL RIGHT, WE'LL SEE HOW HE LIKES THIS
WILL THIS T BE BIG ENOUGH? OO!
I'LL HELP MYSELF TO THE CUTLERY AND THEN SKEDADDLE!
OUT OF MY WAY, WADDLES!
OW!
HE WON'T GET FAR THIS TRIP!
HA'HA'! HE'S GOT HIS BIG T AND A TIP!
TA', WADDLES! TAKE THE HALF DAY OFF!

Our waiter prepared an outsize in big "T's" for the mean cove who promised him no tip. Then the bad lad tried to pinch the cutlery and it tripped him up.

PLUM AND DUFF, THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE!

COLLECT ALL THE SPARE BLANKETS, SUET, AND MAKE IT SNAPPY!
YOU HEARD WHAT THE COLONEL SAID! NOW GO AND DO IT, SEE!
HERE YOU ARE, SARGE!
GOOD! I'LL GO AND TELL THE COLONEL!
LOOK! HERE'S ONE BEING USED FOR A DOORMAT!
WE'LL MAKE THIS ONE!
BLANKETS ALL READY AND CORRECT, SIR!
CORT, THIS IS A HEFTY ONE!
IT MUST BE STUCK DOWN!
FATHEAD! TAKE THAT!
NOW THEN! HEAVE—HO!
SUET'S IN THE SOUP AGAIN!

1. "I want all the spare blankets collected at the double!" Bogey told Suet, "So jump to it." Near by our bold boys were playing marbles.

2. So Suet promptly passed the job on to them. "Cut that out!" he hissed, booting the pair of them. "You heard what the colonel wants done!"

3. Well, our heroes gathered all the blankets they could find and informed Suet that the job was done. Away he whizzed to inform the colonel.

4. "Coo-lummy!" piped Duff, as soon as Suet had disappeared. "There's another blanket down on the floor. It's being used for a doormat!"

5. So they went to collect it, not noticing that Sergy was standing on the other end of it. He was telling Bogey the blankets were all outside.

6. "Waiting for your inspection, sir!" Sergy warbled. Then the boys gave a tug, and up went Suet, kicking the soup into Bogey's face. Wow!

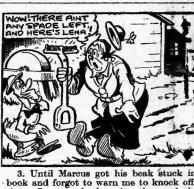
7. "Clumsy clodhopper!" barked Bogey, very annoyed. And as Suet came down on all fours, the old boy crowned him a biff with the soup plate.

8. But the fun didn't end there. Thinking the blanket was fastened down, our heroes gave it another heave, and up shot Suet, biffing Bogey.

9. Didn't the old boy go off the deep end then! "Come here!" he shrieked. But Suet didn't wait. No, off he galloped, with Bogey well on his track!

1. Yes, chums, old Lens tried to put it across me when she got put in charge of the camp garden. First she gave me the oldest spade she could find.

2. "Coo! That's very part worn!" I said. "I'll have to turn it into shape on the grindstone." So I got my pet duckums to help, and all went well—



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COMIC CUTS— KING OF COMICS.
QUIP And CRANKY
DID YOU READ ABOUT MY BROTHER SERVING A BOMBER ACROSS THE ATLANTIC, PAL?
SURE! BUT WHY DID HE FLY ALL THE WAY UP HERE DOWN?
WELL, WHEN HE LEFT AMERICA HE SOLD HIS PLANE AND HIS GASOLINE SO HE FLEW HOME DOWN!
TO KEEP HIS SOCKS UP!
COOKIE SAYS HE'S JUST OUT OF CHEESE!
SURE! ONE LOOK AT HIM AND YOU CAN BELIEVE IT!

P.C. PENNY BAGS THE WANTED BURGLAR
OO-EE! SOUNDS LIKE CYRIL'S SIGNATURE TUNE!
WANTED! CYRIL CRIB CRACKER
CLANK! CLONK! CLUNK!
OHO! A JEMMY! NOW WHOSE IS THIS?
THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ONE NIGHT!
SWAG
COR! HERE'S OLD PENNY ON THE JOB!
HA-HA! LOOK WELL WOT! COP!
BONK!
AND YOU SAMPLE THAT!
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Penny was out to catch Cyril the crib cracker, but the bad lad caught him bending. He would have sacked him on the spot but for Penny's smart footwork.

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BIG BEN AND LITTLE LEN, THE LARKY LADS!

1. "Say, brother!" piped Ben, spotting the poster about the tap dancing contest, with the offer of cash prizes. "We could go in for that."

2. Len was agreeable, so they hurried home and started practising for all they were worth. But the din they kicked up did not please Pa.

3. "I can't read with that row!" he houted. "Go and practise on the piano!" But they took him at his word, tap dancing on the piano top!

4. "I'm not standing for this!" howled his nibs crossly. So while the lads were still at it, he tipped the pair of them out of the window!

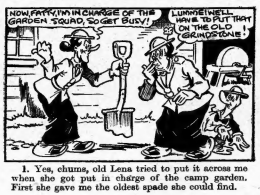
5. "Hoi! hold up!" howled Ben. "What's your giddy game?" But they were on their way and couldn't stop. Outside was a coalman.

6. He was just tipping a sack of coal into the cellar, when the lads landed right on top of him. So he followed the coal and went down the hole.

7. Indoors, Pa was kidding himself that all was now quiet and peaceful at last. "I'm glad I've got rid of those noisy rascals!" he parped.

8. "Now I shall have some peace, I hope!" But 'twas not to be. For out shot the coalman with a fierce snort of wrath and a lump of coal!

9. Thinking Pa was the cause of his troubles, he chased him out of it. And the lads got their dancing practice with the aid of the old fiddler.



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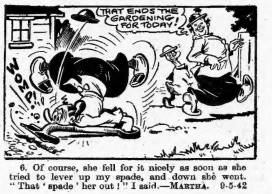
2. "Coo! That's very part worn!" I said. "I'll have to turn it into shape on the grindstone." So I got my pet duckums to help, and all went well—

3. Until Marcus got his beak stuck into a story book and forgot to warn me to knock off turning in time. I got a shock seeing the spade had shrunk.

4. And when I spotted old Lena coming, I made it appear that I was hard at work digging, hoping she wouldn't notice the spade blade was missing.

5. "Bah! Put some beef into it!" hooted Lena, pushing me aside and grabbing the spade handle. "I will now show you how it ought to be done."



6. Of course, she fell for it nicely as soon as she tried to lever up my spade, and down she went. "That 'spade' her out!" I said.—MARTHA. 9-5-42

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ROVER JOE

Wandering Wildcats!

HISSING loudly in the night, the Wandering Wildcats' goods train clanked into Red Steer. And scarcely had the wheels stopped turning than two stealthy young figures dropped down off an empty van.

They were a sturdy pair. But despite their youth, there was something queerly grim about the lads.

To start with, each had had his hair shaven almost off. Both were cold, and pinched by hunger. Both wore ragged breeches, with coarse canvas jackets.

"Stop on it, Bob! Snappy!" hissed the shorter youth. Bent low, they stole away from the train which had brought them out West.

Yet, for all their stealth, they were quickly spotted by a vigilant trainguard. The man rushed, swinging an ugly blackjack. And the crop-haired boys whirled on him like wildcats at bay!

They were quick—and tough. Without fear, the shorter youth dived in low under the guard's club, tackling him round both knees. His taller, burlier comrade let fly a terrific uppercut as the man overbalanced.

Crack! It landed, and the single punch was enough. Grinning dourly, the tough lads bundled the guard back into the van.

Then, eyes glittering, they stole on until they could peer into the town through a gap between the sheds and stables beside the railroad.

Red Steer was a small town, a mere delivery-halt for cattle and goods consigned to the ranches outside. Few people were about; but across the "street" shone the lights of a dingy eating-house.

"A grub-shop! Food!" muttered Bob, the burly lad, in a distinctly English voice. "Spike, old son, I'm hungry!"

"Hungry!" Spike gave a twisted grin as he twanged out the word in the accent of a New York "slummy." "Bob, I'm so dog-gone hungry I could eat de back tyres off'n a foiniture van! Food, money, clothes—we gotta get 'em somehow! I'm all t' dese Western out here won't give 'em to us willin', we've gotta—Look!"

A weatherbeaten little man on an old grey horse came jogging towards the line of sheds and stables. He dismounted, fished open a stable door, and led the horse inside. The boys heard him talking cheerfully.

"Well, Sleepy, looks like yo're lucky to-night," came the gentle, happy-go-lucky voice. "A stable to yoreself, and plenty o' feed. Bed yoreself down, and— Hoi! Doggone, that's my toe you've stepped on, bust you!"

Spike nudged his English pal.

"Dis guy sounds like de chump for us, Bob," he gritted. "We'll sock him as he comes out, see? He looks easy. But mebbe we'll find de price o' one square meal in his pockets, huh?"

"You mean we rob the bloke?" asked Bob.

"Yeah, and what of it?" snapped Spike. "Guess I'd sooner rob dat bo, anyways! Say, we ain't escaped from Jorgen Reformatory and beat it out West just for nothing, have we?"

Bob said nothing, but his square jaw set grimly. The hungry young desperadoes pushed themselves, home and dangerous. And neither knew that the shabby little man they meant to rob was that cheery wanderer, Rover Joe—the toughest handful in the West.

Not that this would have stopped Bob and Spike, even had they known. They were too desperately reckless to fear any man. They heard a contented snort from Sleepy, a final chuckle from Rover Joe. Then the wildcats pounced as he came outside, banging the door.

So fiercely swift was the attack that for once he was a match for Spike's headlong dive at his knees knocked the rover off-balance. Bob's fist lashed at his jaw.

"Huh!" grunted Rover Joe, and he twisted his face aside quickly. Bob's punch missed its exact target, but smacked hard on his victim's neck. Joe's legs were whipped from under him. He crumpled up, arms asprawl, with Spike tearing at his guns.

Ten seconds later Rover Joe was dragged ruthlessly into a shed next to Sleepy's stable—captured by two tough lads!

Comrades in Peril.

"WELL, blow me down!" Rover Joe's voice, dazed, wriggled his bruised neck, but made no further move. The truth was, he felt somewhat dazed. He could hear the excited breathing of his captors. From afar came the rumble of another train steaming into Red Steer.

There was not much light in the shed, either—but Joe had the eyes of a cat. Also, he could make out enough of his assailants to take stock of them.

Then he saw something else which made his hair rise on end. Spike was holding one of Joe's own guns!

"Hoi!" gasped Joe. "Turn that carelessly this way, you fool kid, before it goes off!"

"It'll go off all right, buddy, if yuse get fresh!" retorted Spike. "Listen! Can you hear another train comin' in? Well, my pal and I can stand pattier and clear out o' here if we're quick. So if you've got any cash, cough it up right now!"

Joe grunted. As it happened, the little rolling stone did have some money that night—fifty dollars, earned on a Wyoming ranch. Menaced by a desperate young novice, Joe decided to part up with his cash, quick and lively.

But even that did not suit the tough wildcats.

"Aw, no, you don't!" rapped Spike, as Joe's hand moved to his hip-pocket. "You're too smart to any tricks, sucker! Bob, get round behind dis guy. Grab his money out yoreself!"

Bob obeyed silently. He seized the little adventurer one-handed in a grip that hurt. The other hand plunged down into Joe's hip-pocket.

And then, at last, Bob and Spike got their first real taste of Rover Joe!

Even as Bob bent over him, Joe whipped his raised hands backwards behind the boy's neck. Came a gasp, a lightning heave, then a whirl of twisting limbs. Then Bob crashed, sailed aside as his English friend was hurled flying over Rover Joe's shoulders. Thud! Both boys crashed, sprawling on the floor together.

"Now, my bold young buckos!" cried Joe, springing to his feet like a cat. "Now, my bonny gaolbirds, I'll teach you to—Gosh!"

A terrific crash suddenly split the night; the piledriving smash made by a moving train driving into a stationary one. Then came a rumble, a roar, a crash of thunderclap. It sent Joe staggering, deafened and shocked.

There, with the uproar, rose the awful high bellowing of frightened steers! It was a loaded cattle-train that had piled into the empty "goods" in Red Steer siding!

"Spike, hark at those poor brutes! Quick!" Joe heard the boy's voice cry out, no longer hard and arrogant. But he scarcely heeded the shout, for he was already rushing out of the shed himself.

And a truly terrible sight greeted him outside.

Fire! Flames had leapt out of the wrecked engine-cab and seized on a wooden van behind. And beyond the flaring debris shuddered a long line of cattle trucks, with groggy men staring helplessly.

Inside those trucks, scores of huge Western steers were bawling in' terror as the firelight glanced redly!

"Thunder! Someone's gotta free them critters before th' fire gets 'em!" gasped Joe, and ran fast as he spoke. Hardly had he gone five yards, however, when two flamelit figures raced past him.

They were Bob and Spike, the runaway wildcats from Jorgan Reformatory. All their thoughts of robbery-with-violence seemed forgotten now that dumb animals were in peril.

Spike leapt fearlessly at the first cattle-van—and he still held a gun, Joe's second weapon. He fired at the huge padlock; wasted two precious shots in his excitement. But the third bullet hit home, and Bob sprang up, wrenching a draw-bar from its sockets by sheer strength.

And then it was Rover Joe's turn to fling himself forward.

"Look out, you young chumps! Duck aside—for your lives!"

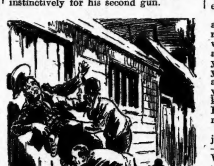
Joe flung Spike away from the van, then dragged Bob after him. For, when the great truck door crashed open, the packed animals inside fairly burst out. In a tumbling, brown-red mass, the maddened steers hurtled to earth.

But the fire was gaining fast, and there were more locked vans yet.

Down the line panted Rover Joe, and now he was firing himself with his very deadliest accuracy, shattering each padlock in turn on the run. One lock, one bullet! He could spare no more.

And he wasted none. It was wizard shooting, an eye-opener indeed for boys who thought themselves tough. Crak-ck! The firing ceased with one click of a trigger clicked on an empty chamber.

"Doggone!" he panted, and grabbed instinctively for his second gun.



The two boys pounced on Joe, and he crumpled up!

"Here it is! Gun—and belt!" gasped a voice in his ear.

Joe spun round. The two wildcats were still at his heels.

Both were swaying with hunger-weakness now, and both had taken heavy falls. But Spike was silently holding out Joe's gun-belt, and Bob, as usual, stood silent and burly behind his friend.

"Good!" was all Joe said, and, reloading with magic speed, he ran on, firing. More and more cattle poured out, fighting to safety from the opened vans. The last padlock was blown to bits.

And Joe, in the act of dodging aside, twisted his ankle over and fell flat down on his face.

Rover Joe's New Job!

THE little adventurer gave himself up for lost then.

He remembered all around him—right on top of him, it seemed. He felt someone seize his legs, then Bob's thick arms lifted him by the shoulders. Together the wildcats ran with their burden, dodging blindly out of the stampede. They collapsed at last behind the barn, falling on top of Rover Joe, exhausted but safe.

And while the boys lay there, sobbing for breath, Rover Joe crawled out from under them like some tough old badger.

A quick look back showed him all the vans empty, with cattle streaming into Red Steer. Then he cocked an eye at the wildcats.

"You kids can relax now," Joe drawled. "Th' gents in Red Steer will tend th' cattle and th' train-men who got hurt. It's all over."

"Oh, yeah?" Spike shrugged, as if he still didn't care a boot. "Well, then—guess we'll be driftin' on, mister."

For answer, Joe suddenly thrust his guns into the wildcats' ribs, jabbing them hard.

"Sit still!" he snapped. "And don't sowel at me, either! First off, you're a pair of escaped young gaolbirds, ain't you? Yore prison crop an' clothes tell me that!"

"Yes, we are!" burst out the New Boy savagely. "We hooked it from Jorgen, after K'dging de guard. So what? Are you goose gonna drive us back and claim de reward, y'old rat?"

Joe gun-jabbed him again.

"Shut up, bust you!" he rapped back harshly. "You tried to rob me, but you're my prisoners now. Come on—tough guys! Tell me all about yourselves."

The wildcats snorted, but in the end Joe forced them relentlessly to obey, and their grim story was soon told.

Bob Taylor was a stray orphan, the son of English parents who died dead in America. His stocky, hardboiled chum, Spike Muldoon, had been born and bred in the Bowery, the roughest slums of that city.

And both were now "hard cases." Drifting into bad, they had been heavily punished already.

"I see," nodded Joe, at the finish. "So you've legged it into th' Wild West—figurin' to be bold, bad bandits, eh?

"Well, that's wrong! First off, you ain't tough enough for th' West, yet, not nearly. It's a hard place. If you want to work, you've got to work hard; and if you mean to be a real man, you've got to be real bad. But, so far, you kids ain't anything at all. You ain't even a tramp as smart as you think you are. If I did my duty now, I'd kick you straight along to th' sheriff. But I won't do that—just for one reason."

"Say now, ain't you swell!" Spike jeered. "Go home yoreself, mister face —we ain't askin' mercy from anyone! Why don't you hand us over to th' many-whiskered sheriff, then?"

"Because I've seen a gleam of good in you both," Joe replied slowly. "You sure must've been desperate trapped steers, and did fine work. Also, you saved my life. That was a good deed, and I'll repay it. I'm sentencing you to gaol myself—my own kind of gaol!"

"Aw, rats! That's a thundering good reward for saving your life, I must say!" cried Bob Taylor. "Thank you for nothing!"

"Pipe down!" Joe said quietly. "You're needed to have civility, discipline, skilled work. I'm sentencing you to a travelling gaol, with me as your gaoler. Savvy? While I'm—you'll go; and what I teach you, you'll learn. You are wild colts who need breaking in for good. I'll break you in—or break yore necks!"

"Hang you, we won't obey anyone any more!" Bob Taylor cried fiercely. "Spike and me have run away, and we got us now with your guns, you old toad, but the first chance we get we'll leave you feeling sorry you ever caught us! That's telling you straight!"

Rover Joe smiled.

"My lads, you'll never leave me till I say so," he drawled. "I'm easy-going, but I stick to a job like glue. I dunno why I'm bothering about you, but I aim to be some schoolmaster, cowmaster and boss in this old Wild West! Now march ahead o' me to supper and bed. And you'll start work in the morning to pay me for what I spend!"

Joe's guns jabbed again, and the wildcats, helpless but far from meek, turned their hungry faces towards the town. It was the first step on a new road for English Bob and Spike, the Bowery boy. It was to be a trail that spelt trouble for Rover Joe!

(Another grand Rover Joe story in next Friday week's number.)

SAVE WASTE PAPER
IT CAN BE USED AGAIN AND IT IS NEEDED BADLY
9-5-42

A Merry Mirthquake!

THE SECRET!

A Day Out!

PUNCTUALLY at five o'clock Ned Niggleby put away his ledgers and other work, having finished for the day. Sitting beside him, his friend and colleague Jim Judd followed suit.

"Another day gone—thank goodness!" said Jim with a sigh of relief.

"Yes, but it only means that tomorrow morning we shall have to roll up as usual and start all over again," replied Ned. "That's all life seems to be—work, work, work!"

But at that moment Mr. Wuffley, the boss, came into the office. He was a jolly looking, stout gentleman, and his face was beaming.

"Ah, just off, you two?" he said cheerily. "I thought I'd catch you before you went."

"Lummy! He's going to ask us to stay late and do a bit more!" mumbled Ned.

But there he was quite wrong, as he very soon found.

"You two can have to-morrow off if you like," the boss went on. "There's nothing much to do, and it's nice weather."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" cried Ned and Jim in surprised chorus.

A few minutes later they were outside the office, talking about their unexpected stroke of good luck.

"Fancy the old boy giving us the day off!" loofed Jim. "It was the last thing I was expecting."

"Same here," added Ned. "Not that it'll be any good to me."

"Why not?" asked Jim. "You'll enjoy a day off, won't you?"

"No, I shan't," replied Ned, who was never a very cheerful sort of individual. "Directly I tell the missus I'm free to-morrow she'll fill the day up for me somehow. She'll want me to take her over to see her mother, or something equally awful."

"But why tell her?" asked Jim. "Why not keep it to yourself—and you and I go out together on our own for the day. How does that strike you?"

Ned's eyes glinted.

"There's something in that," he said. "After all, there's no need for me to say anything at all to the missus."

"No, of course not," said Jim. "Just leave home to-morrow morning at the usual time, as though you were going to the office, and come and call for me. Then we'll go out somewhere for the whole day and return home in the evening at the usual hour."

"Yes, with the usual story of having had a hard day's work!" said Ned with a grin. "Jim, it's a spiffing idea, and you can count on me. I'll call for you in the morning, and leave all arrangements to you as to how we spend the day."

So it was arranged, and in due course they parted and went to their respective homes. The prospect of having the following day off made Ned's peepers sparkle all the way. But when he reached home he put on his usual doleful expression.

"Oh dear!" he cried, as he entered the house. "Another day gone, thank goodness! And what a day! I'm worn right out!"

"What have you got to worry about?" replied his wife. "You're always moaning about the work you do. Anybody would think no one ever did any work but you. How about me? Don't I ever do anything?"

"Ah, but housework isn't the same as office work!" retorted Ned. "It's nothing like so tiring, for one thing. Besides, you're your own master in your own house. You can start a job when you like and leave off when you like. If you don't fancy doing it, you needn't, or you can leave it till next week. But you can't do that in an office."

"Bah! Don't talk nonsense!" replied his wife. "You try housework yourself and see what it's like. See what the house would look like, too, if you didn't keep hard at it, doing all the jobs that have to be done when they come along, and a lot of others besides that you don't expect."

"I'd change places for a week with you any day," said Ned. "Then you'd see who does the most tiring work."

They had supper, and in due course went to bed. Ned got up at the usual hour next morning, and at breakfast said a few more words about the nuisance and monotony of having to go to the office day after day.

"Still, it can't be helped!" he said with a sigh. "Somebody's got to earn the money!"

Off he went a little later, to all intents and purposes bound for the office. But directly he turned the corner of the street, Ned's doleful expression vanished and he was all smiles.

"Now for a day off with old Jim!" he gurgled. "I'm looking forward to this morning!" said Jim. And, what's more, I deserve it. I wonder what Jim has arranged for to-day?"

Jim gave him a hearty welcome when he reached the house and invited him inside.

He thought we'd take the train out somewhere and have a good walk in the country," he told Ned.

"Sounds fine!" nodded Ned. "And the missus thinks I'm at the office all day. Ha, ha! If she only knew. But she doesn't, and she never will!"

As soon as some sandwiches had been cut and packed the two set off for the railway station. It was a lovely day, and both felt as happy as a tiddler with two tails.

But when they reached the railway station Ned had the shock of his life. For who should be standing outside the booking office but Mrs. Niggleby, his wife!

"My hat!" he gasped, pulling up dead. "Look, Jim—there's my missus! Don't let her see me!"

"Too late—she's seen you!" groaned Jim. "Look, she's waving to you. What on earth is she doing here?"

"That's what I want to know!" moaned Ned. "Something must have happened."

He managed to pull himself together, and the pair of them reached Mrs. Niggleby, both raising their hats.

"Hallo, my dear!" said Ned. "This is a surprise! Anything wrong? What's brought you here?"

Mrs. Niggleby did not answer that question. Instead she asked Ned one.

"Are you going to the office?" she inquired.

"Er—why, yes, of course!" replied Ned. "That—that's why I'm here. Of course I'm going to the office. What a silly question. Why do you ask me that?"

"Because I'm coming with you" was the unexpected reply.

Ned nearly fell down with astonishment.

"You're cuc-cuc-coming with me?" he gulped. "What on earth for?"

"Oh, just to satisfy my own curiosity as to how hard you really do work," replied his wife. "You remember what you said last night—and what you're always saying. So I'm coming to spend the day with you at your office, to see for myself."

"But—but it's ridiculous!" spluttered Ned, his head whirling. "Mr. Wuffley would never allow it!"

"I'm sure he would raise no objections to my spending the day at the office with you to-day," replied the lady.

Ned turned to Jim desperately, but his friend was unable to say anything to help him out. The appearance of Mrs. Niggleby, coupled with her threat, made it obvious that the proposed day out was in danger of being right off the menu.

"Look here, my dear!" snorted Ned desperately. "My work is my work and you've no right to interfere with it. You'll risk me losing my job. You don't know what you're saying."

"Oh, yes, I do!" retorted the lady sweetly. "What's more, I mean what I say. Either I'm coming to the office with you today—or you're coming back home with me!"

Ned clutched at Jim to support him self, and then he went on speaking.

"I think it had better be the latter," he said. "Come on—back home with me! Good-morning, Mr. Judd. My husband will see you to-morrow as usual—at the office!"

Like one in a trance, unable to speak, the unhappy Ned was forcibly steered along the street. His day out had gone phut, and what he was in for now he had not the vaguest idea.

His wife still clung when they reached home, and he was taken through to the scullery. There all was prepared for a day's washing as Ned saw at a glance.

"Here, I say!" he cried, pulling himself together with an effort. "This—this is preposterous! Dragging me back home! And this, making me look a fool in public and preventing me from going to the office to do my work! I won't have it, I say! I'll put my foot down!"

"You'll put both feet down right there—in front of that washtub!" snorted Mrs. Niggleby fiercely. "And that's where you're going to stop till the washing's done!"

"The—the washing?" gasped Ned.

"Yes, you're going to do it instead of me!" his wife continued. "I'll let you see for yourself what housework is like—or some of it, at any rate. I'll teach you to have a day off, my beauty, and not say a word about it to me, leaving me to work myself away to a shadow while you're out with your friend enjoying yourself!"

"Wow! Hold me up, someone!" gasped the dizzy Ned. "She—she knows everything!"

"You're quite right, I do know!" retorted the lady. "I know all about you and Jim Judd having to-day off from the office, anyway."

"But—but who—who told you?" gulped Ned weakly.

"Your boss—Mr. Wuffley himself!" was the surprising reply.

"He did?" howled Ned. "When?"

"This morning," explained Mrs. Niggleby. "Only a few minutes after you'd gone, he came in his car and told me he'd given you both the day off, and if you'd made no other arrangements he'd give you a run as he has some business calls to make. That's how I got to know your secret, my beauty. So I told him you'd evidently made arrangements, but I'd step in. And I have done. I've brought you back here to do that washing, and I'm going to see that you do it."

There was no help for it. Ned had to turn to and do the washing, his better half standing by with a rolling-pin. Ned put in the busiest morning of his life, and when lunch-time came he was definitely exhausted.

But there was still some more washing to do, and he had to do it.

"Let me tell you that's all his wife. "Your boss said before he went off this morning that he would come back after lunch, and if you were here, then he'd take us both for a run. So it's up to you to wade in and get that washing finished, otherwise you shan't go!"

Spurred on by this bit of news, Ned did wade in, and he managed to get the last of the washing done a few minutes before Mr. Wuffley arrived in his car.

He took them both for a run, and Ned spent a very enjoyable afternoon, after all. But neither he nor his wife said a word as to how he had spent the morning!

(Another of these funny stories in our next number, on sale Friday week.)

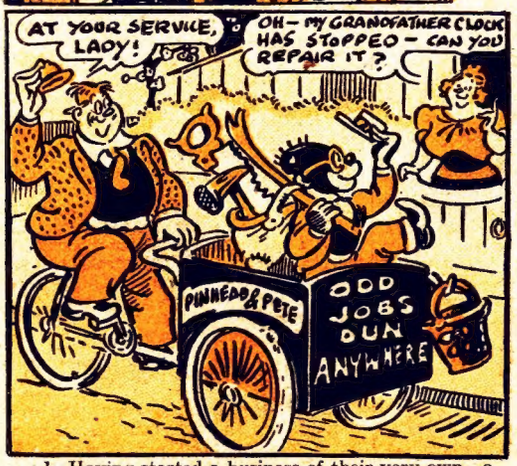
9-5-42

Ned had to do all the washing, with his wife standing by!

FOILED AGAIN!
A "crashing" adventure of The THREE MUSTARDEERS
"That's funny. Old Postie went down Maple Road five minutes ago, yet there's another postman on the round—and he's a stranger. This needs looking into." So the Three Mustardeers, Roger, Jim and Mary, scenting adventure, followed him.
"Keep back, kids. He's going to Mr. Trent's." From behind the hedge, they saw the strange postman deliver a large square parcel. Nothing strange about that. Mr. Trent was an inventor and often received large parcels.
But when the postman got along the road, he jumped into a waiting car. "Jingo," cried Roger, "that was no ordinary postman—and no ordinary parcel."
They dashed back to Mr. Trent's, and told their story. "Did you see the car number?" "Yes," said Jim, COL 246. I remember it because I thought of Colman's Mustard—and 246 is an easy number." "Fine, we'll get the Flying Squad on his trail," said Mr. Trent, going to the telephone.
Next he carried the parcel carefully down the garden, and ran back! One minute—two minutes—three, four—and just when the Three Mustardeers were beginning to feel foolish . . . the parcel exploded with a terrific crash. "Oh, a V.A.D. bomb," screamed Mary with delight. "Shut up, Mary. She means A.D.A. bomb." "You've saved my life," said Mr. Trent. "But, modest gentlemen, you've saved an invention of mine that Hitler would like to smash. Now, it'll help to smash him."
SAID JIM:
"That's just what's needed, as the man said when he dabbed the Mustard on his plate."
Mustard is the hero of most "inside" stories—every boy and girl should remember that. It helps to keep your tummy in good working order so that the villains of the piece (aches and pains) don't have a chance to get hold of you. What a bit of luck—isn't it?—that meat is nicer with Mustard.
COLMAN'S MUSTARD

PINHEAD and PETE

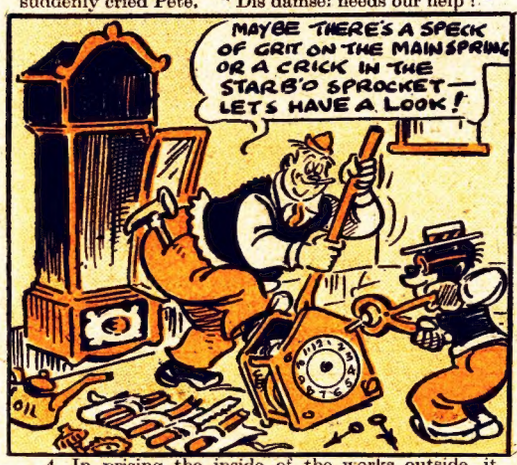
PINHEAD GIVES PETE THE WORKS!



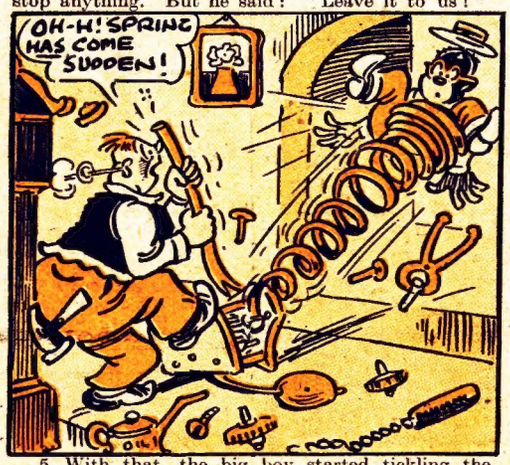
1. Having started a business of their very own—a real going concern—our priceless pals, actually speeded off to look for work. "Back pedal, chum!" suddenly cried Pete. "Dis damsel needs our help!"

2. Of course, after a close-up view of Miss Ann Teak's dial, Pinhead was not surprised that her old grandfather clock had stopped. Her face would stop anything. But he said: "Leave it to us!"

3. The good lady did, and while they were making themselves familiar with the works, she popped round to the beauty parlour. "Ah! This is going to be our busy day!" puffed Pinhead.

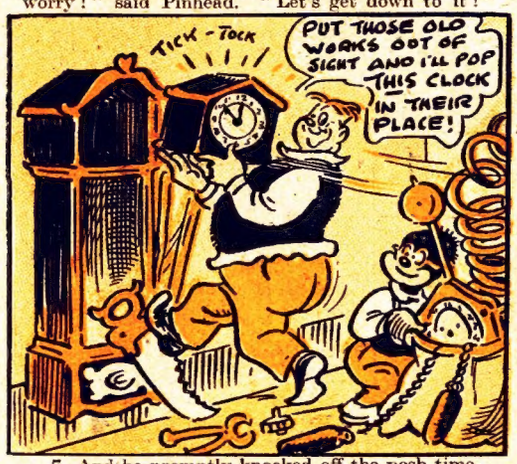


4. In prising the inside of the works outside, it slipped and gave pussums an unexpected surprise. "I guess dat's crashed it, chum!" cried Pete. "Don't worry!" said Pinhead. "Let's get down to it!"



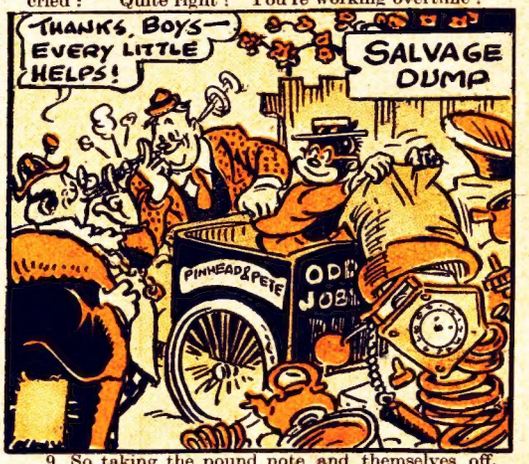
5. With that, the big boy started tickling the crank-case with a crowbar, and all of a sudden an outsize in clocksprings biffed Pete in the bread-basket and carried him away into the sitting-room.

6. "Wow! Hold me back! It am not knocking-off time yet!" gurgled the coon. So in popped Pinhead and seeing Pete parked on the parlour clock he cried: "Quite right! You're working overtime!"



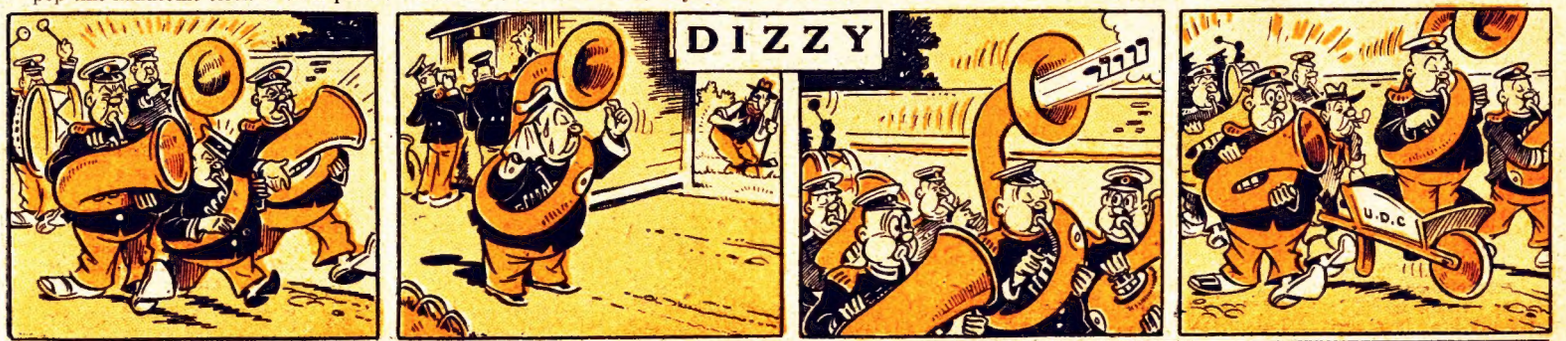
7. And he promptly knocked off the posh time-piece and carried it out into the hall. "Hurry up and get those old works out of here, coon, while I pop this handsome clock in their place!" said he.

8. Talk about a striking idea! When the lady of the house returned two hours later and spotted the result of our pals' handiwork, she was ever so pleased. "Nice work, boys!" she dithered. "Take this!"



9. So taking the pound note and themselves off, Pinhead and Pete wheeled their outfit round to the Salvage Dump and handed over the old clock works to the mayor for scrap. Yes, they're bright lads!

DIZZY



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